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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

Workshop on International Outreach and Training on Good Agricultural and Good Manufacturing Practices for Fresh Produce

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is announcing the following meeting: Workshop on International Outreach and Training on Good Agricultural and Good Manufacturing Practices for Fresh Produce. The topics to be discussed are developing a collaborative process for identifying training needs for foreign growers and producers who export fresh produce to the United States and identifying effective strategies to best meet those needs.

Date and Time: The meeting will be held on April 26 and 27, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and on April 28, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

Location: The workshop will be held at the Inn and Conference Center, University of Maryland University College, University Blvd. at Adelphi Rd., College Park, MD, 301-985-7300.

Contact: Camille E. Brewer, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (HFS-32), Food and Drug Administration, 200 C St. SW., Washington, DC 20204, 202-260-2314, FAX 202-260-9653, e-mail 'cbrewer@oc.fda.gov'.

Registration: The meeting is open to the public. However, space is limited and preregistration is required. Send preregistration information (including name, title, firm name, address, telephone, and fax number), to Wendy Buckler, JIFSAN (HFS-6), Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, FDA, 200 C St. SW., Washington, DC 20204, 202-2054153, FAX 202-260-1654, e-mail 'wbuckler@bangate.fda.gov' v. Translation into Spanish will be available. Limited space will

be available at no cost to groups interested in exhibiting outreach, education, and training materials on produce safety. However, all exhibitors must preregister with Ms. Buckler.

If you need special accommodations due to a disability, please contact Ms. Buckler at least 7 days in advance.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 2, 1997, the President announced the “Initiative to Ensure the Safety of Imported and Domestic Fruits and Vegetables” (fresh produce safety initiative). As part of the fresh produce safety initiative, the President directed the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), in cooperation with the agricultural community, to issue within 1 year guidance on good agricultural practices and good manufacturing practices for fresh fruits and vegetables. FDA coordinated the effort for DHHS.

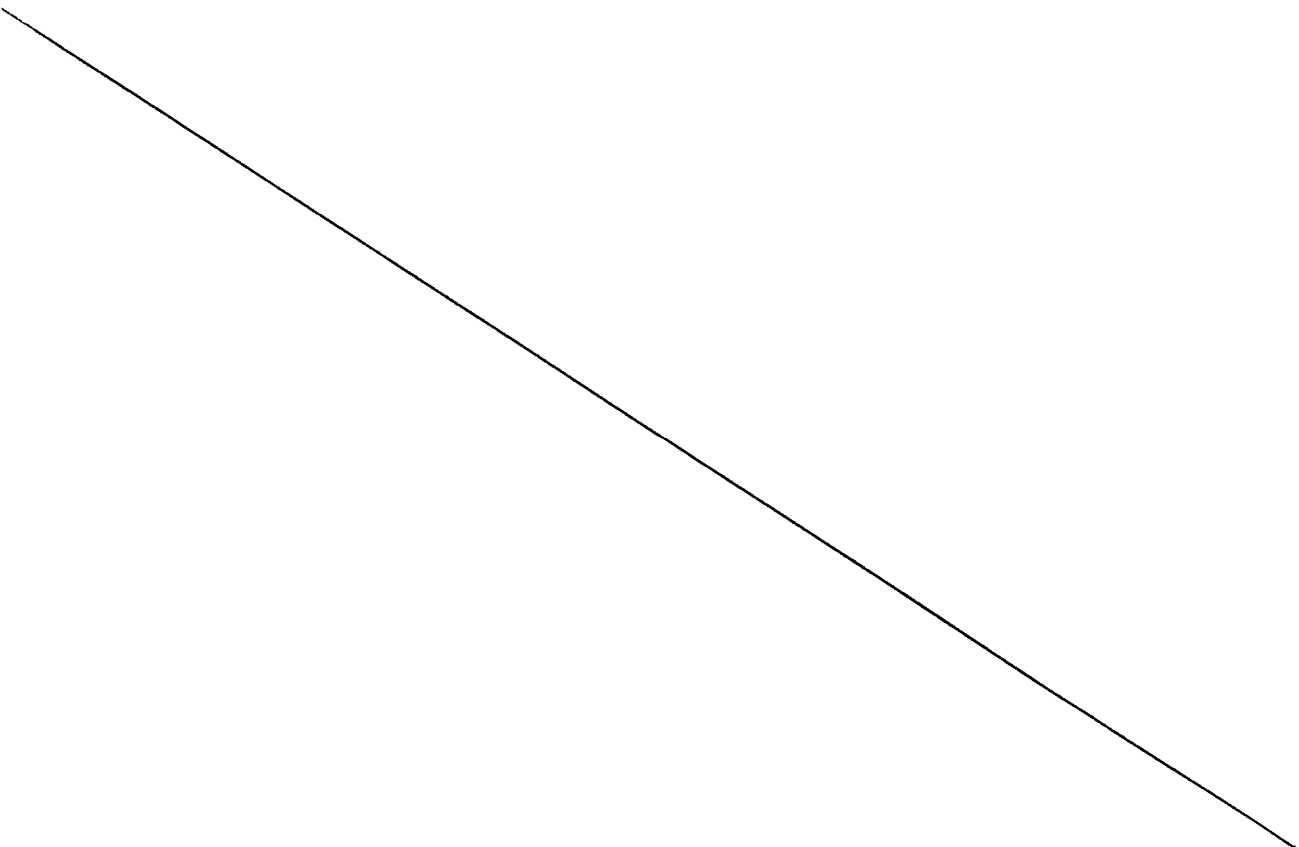
FDA announced the availability of the final good agricultural practices and good manufacturing practices guidance on October 29, 1998 (63 FR 58055), after receiving and considering comments on the draft guidance from producers, foreign governments, and trade associations both in writing and during two separate rounds of public meetings on successively more developed drafts of the guide. The final guide (the guide) details a broad approach on how to minimize microbial contamination of produce through the control of Water, manure, worker health and hygiene, field and facility sanitation, and transportation.

On February 24, 1998, USDA and FDA issued a progress report to the President on the Initiative to Ensure the Safety of Imported and Domestic Fruits and Vegetables. The report summarized the progress USDA and FDA have made in providing good agricultural practices and good manufacturing practices guidance to domestic and international growers, harvesters, handlers, and transporters of fresh fruits and vegetables. The report discussed, among other things, the agencies’ plans for assisting domestic and foreign producers to improve those practices.

The report stated that education and outreach programs are essential to foster appropriate application of the guidance by the domestic and international fresh fruit and vegetable industry,

and that such programs are pivotal to industry's understanding of the essential principles of the guidance, as well as the scientific and practical reasons for application of the guidance as everyday production and processing practice.

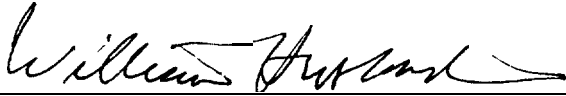
The FDA workshop will begin the process for determining how to develop an education and outreach program for growers and producers of fresh fruit and vegetables imported into the United States. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the most effective approaches for education and training and to identify any science-based needs that will further the implementation of the guide. At the meeting, foreign and domestic scientific experts, extension professionals, and industry representatives will make presentations on the applications of the guide. Representatives from donor organizations (e.g., the InterAmerican Development Bank) will also address infrastructure improvements needed to enhance food safety. Although the meeting will not offer training, *per se*, participants will have the opportunity to share current educational information and industry



strategies that can further enhance the microbiological safety of fresh fruits and vegetables and contribute to the development of an educational framework for users of the guide.

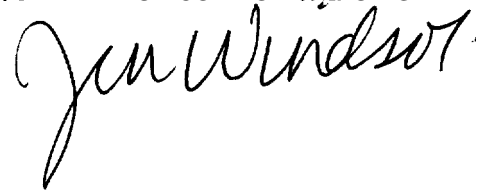
Dated: MAR 17 1999

March 17, 1999



William K. Hubbard
Acting Deputy Commissioner for Policy

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